

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Previously Presented) A disk array device including a component that can be degraded, comprising:

a trouble point storage unit which stores a point value of the component;

a point update unit which subtracts a predetermined point value from the point value stored in said trouble point storage unit and stores the subtracted point value in said trouble point storage unit, when a processing fault occurs on the component;

a degradation unit which degrades the component when the point value stored in said trouble point storage unit falls below a reference value; and

a trouble point recovery unit which adds an another predetermined point value to the point value stored in said trouble point storage unit, when a predetermined time period passes since the trouble point recovery unit had added to the point value a last time.

2. (Previously Presented) A disk array device including a component that can be degraded, comprising:

a trouble point storage unit which stores a point value of the component;

a point update unit which adds a predetermined point value from the point value stored in said trouble point storage unit and stores the added point value in said trouble point storage unit, when a processing fault occurs on the component;

a degradation unit which degrades the component when the point value stored in said trouble point storage unit exceeds a reference value; and

a trouble point recovery unit which subtracts an another predetermined point value to the point value stored in said trouble point storage unit, when a predetermined time period passes since the trouble point recovery unit had subtracted to the point value a last time.

3. (Original) A disk array device which can degrade a plurality of disks and comprises:

a trouble point storage unit which stores point values of each disk;

a point update unit which subtracts a predetermined point value from the corresponding point value stored in said trouble point storage unit and stores the subtracted

point value in said trouble point storage unit, when a processing fault occurs on one of the disks;

a degradation unit which degrades a corresponding disk when the point value stored in said trouble point storage unit falls below a reference value; and

a trouble point recovery unit which adds an another predetermined point value to each point values stored in said trouble point storage unit, when a predetermined time period passes since the trouble point recovery unit had added to the point value a last time.

4. (Previously Presented) The disk array device according to claim 3:

wherein said trouble point storage unit comprises a trouble case table storing point values of each disk and a processing-time-reference exceeding case table storing point values of each disk;

wherein said disk array device further comprises a processing-time-reference exceeding case point update unit which subtracts a predetermined point value from the point value stored in said processing-time-reference exceeding case table, in a case where a processing time for a required processing exceeds a reference time on a disk; and

wherein said trouble case point update unit updates point value stored in said trouble case table; and

wherein said degradation unit degrades a corresponding disk when the point value stored in said trouble case table falls below a first reference value or the point value stored in said processing-time-reference exceeding case table falls below a second reference value.

5. (Original) The disk array device according to claim 3, further comprising:

a point initialization unit which sets, in a case where a defective disk is replaced, a point value corresponding to the defective disk stored in said trouble point storage unit to an initial value.

6. (Original) The disk array device according to claim 3, wherein said degradation unit receives a point update notification concerning a disk number from said trouble case point update unit, and determines whether the point value stored in said trouble point storage unit in association with the disk number is equal to or lower than a predetermined reference value, and degrades a disk having the disk number in a case where determining that the point value is equal to or lower than the reference value.

7. (Original) The disk array device according to claim 3, wherein said point update unit notifies information indicating that the point value has been updated to said degradation unit.

8. (Original) A disk array device comprising:

a trouble point storage unit which stores a point value of the component;

a point update unit which subtracts a predetermined point value from the point value stored in said trouble point storage unit and stores the subtracted point value in said trouble point storage unit, when a processing fault occurs on the component;

a processing rate adjusting unit which lowers a processing rate of a component in a case where the point value of the component stored in said trouble point storage unit becomes equal to or lower than a reference value, and sets the processing rate of the component to a predetermined normal state in a case where the point value of the component stored in said trouble point storage unit exceeds the reference value; and

a trouble point recovery unit which adds an another predetermined point value to the point value stored in said trouble point storage unit, when a predetermined time period passes since the trouble point recovery unit added to the point value a last time.

9. (Original) A disk array device which can degrade a plurality of disks comprising:

a trouble point storage unit which stores point values of each disk;

a point update unit which subtracts a predetermined point value from the corresponding point value stored in said trouble point storage unit and stores the subtracted point value in said trouble point storage unit, when a processing fault occurs on one of the disks;

a processing rate adjusting unit which lowers a processing rate of a disk in a case where the point value of the disk stored in said trouble point storage unit becomes equal to or lower than a reference value, and sets the processing rate of the disk to a predetermined normal state in a case where the point value of the disk stored in said trouble point storage unit exceeds the reference value; and

a trouble point recovery unit which adds an another predetermined point value to each point values stored in said trouble point storage unit, when a predetermined time period passes since the trouble point recovery unit had added to the point value a last time.

10. (Original) The disk array device according to claim 9 wherein:  
the plurality of disks is mirrored; and

said processing rate adjusting unit lowers a processing rate of a disk and raises a processing rate of a disk paired with the disk in a case where the point value of the disk stored in said trouble point storage unit becomes equal to or lower than the reference value, and sets the processing rate of the disk and the processing rate of the paired disk to the predetermined normal state in a case where the point value of the disk stored in said trouble point storing unit exceeds the reference value.

11. (Previously Presented) The disk array device according to claim 10 wherein said processing rate adjusting unit:

reads the point values of each disk storing in said trouble point storage unit;

determines whether or not the point value change from greater than the reference value to equal to or lower than the reference value, and lowers a processing rate of a disk in a case where determining that the point value of the disk change to equal to or lower than the reference value; and

determines whether or not the point value change from equal to or lower than the reference value to greater than the reference value, and adjusts a processing rate of a disk so as to set a predetermined initial rate in a case where determining that the point value of the disk change to greater than the reference value.

12. (Previously Presented) A component degradation method in a disk array device having a plurality of components degradable and a memory storing point values regarding each of the plurality of components, the method comprising:

subtracting a predetermined point value from the point value stored in said memory and storing the subtracted point value in said memory, when a processing fault occurs on one of the components;

degrading the component when the point value stored in said memory falls below a reference value; and

adding an another predetermined point value to the point value stored in said memory, when a predetermined time period passes since a last addition of the point value.

13. (Previously Presented) A component degradation method in a disk array device having a plurality of components degradable and a memory storing point values regarding each of the plurality of components, the method comprising:

adding a predetermined point value from the point value stored in said trouble point storage unit and storing the added point value in said trouble point storage unit, when a processing fault occurs on the component;

degrading the component when the point value stored in said trouble point storage unit exceeds a reference value; and

subtracting an another predetermined point value to the point value stored in said trouble point storage unit, when a predetermined time period passes since last subtraction of the point value.

14. (Previously Presented) A disk degradation method in a disk array device having a plurality of disks degradable and a memory storing point values regarding each of the plurality of disks, the method comprising:

subtracting a predetermined point value from the corresponding point value stored in said memory and storing the subtracted point value in said memory, when a processing fault occurs on one of the disks;

degrading a corresponding disk when the point value stored in said memory falls below a reference value; and

adding an another predetermined point value to each point values stored in said memory, when a predetermined time period passes since a last addition of the point value.

15. (Previously Presented) The disk degradation method according to claim 14, wherein said memory stores first point values and second point values regarding each of the plurality of disks; and

wherein said disk degradation method further comprises:

subtracting a first predetermined point value from the corresponding first point value stored in said memory and storing the subtracted point value in said memory, when a processing fault occurs on one of the disks;

subtracting a second predetermined point value from the corresponding second point value stored in said memory and storing the subtracted point value in said memory, in a

case where a processing time for a required processing exceeds a reference time on one of the disk;

degrading a corresponding disk when the first point value stored in said memory falls below a first reference value or the second point value stored in said memory falls below a second reference value; and

adding an another predetermined point value to each point values stored in said memory, when a predetermined time period passes since a last addition of the point value.

16. (Previously Presented) The disk degradation method according to claim 14, wherein said disk degradation method further comprises:

setting each point value corresponding to the defective disk stored in said trouble point storage unit to an initial value, in a case where a defective disk is replaced.

17. (Previously Presented) A method of restricting a drop in performance of a disk array device wherein a disk array device, having a plurality of disks, a memory storing point values regarding each of the plurality of disks, the method comprising:

subtracting a predetermined point value from the corresponding point value stored in said memory and stores storing the subtracted point value in said memory, when a processing fault occurs on one of the disks;

lowering a processing rate of a disk in a case where the point value of the disk stored in said memory becomes equal to or lower than a reference value;

setting the processing rate of the disk to a predetermined normal state in a case where the point value of the disk stored in said memory exceeds the reference value; and

adding some point value to each point value stored in said memory, when a predetermined time period passes since a last addition of the point value.

18. (Previously Presented) The method of restricting a drop in performance of a disk array device according to claim 17, wherein said disk array device further has a control unit controlling read processing and write processing on each of the plurality of disks, and wherein the method further comprises:

issuing an instruction to the control unit so that a processing rate of a disk is lowered in a case where it is detected that the point value of the disk stored in the memory becomes

equal to or lower than the reference value, and issuing an instruction to said control unit so that the processing rate of the disk is changed to a predetermined normal rate in a case where it is detected that the point value of the disk stored in the memory becomes greater than the reference value.

19. (Previously Presented) A computer readable medium storing a computer program for controlling a computer having of degradable component to act as:

- a trouble point storage unit which stores a point value of the component;

- a point update unit which subtracts a predetermined point value from the point value stored in said trouble point storage unit and stores the subtracted point value in said trouble point storage unit, when a processing fault occurs on the component;

- a degradation unit which degrades the component when the point value stored in said trouble point storage unit falls below a reference value; and

- a trouble point recovery unit which adds an another predetermined point value to the point value stored in said trouble point storage unit, when a predetermined time period passes since the trouble point recovery unit had added to the point value a last time.

20. (Previously Presented) A computer readable medium storing a computer program for controlling a computer having a plurality of degradable disks to act as:

- a trouble point storage unit which stores point values of each disk;

- a point update unit which subtracts a predetermined point value from the corresponding point value stored in said trouble point storage unit and stores the subtracted point value in said trouble point storage unit, when a processing fault occurs on one of the disks;

- a degradation unit which degrades a corresponding disk when the point value stored in said trouble point storage unit falls below a reference value; and

- a trouble point recovery unit which adds an another predetermined point value to each point value stored in said trouble point storage unit, when a predetermined time period passes since the trouble point recovery unit had added to the point value a last time.

21. (Previously Presented) A computer readable medium storing a computer program for controlling a computer having a plurality of degradable disks to act as:

- trouble point storage unit which stores point values of each disk;

a point update unit which subtracts a predetermined point value from the corresponding point value stored in said trouble point storage unit and stores the subtracted point value in said trouble point storage unit, when a processing fault occurs on one of the disks;

a processing rate adjusting unit which lowers a processing rate of a disk in a case where the point value of the disk stored in said trouble point storage unit becomes equal to or lower than a reference value, and sets the processing rate of the disk to a predetermined normal state in a case where the point value of the disk stored in said trouble point storage unit exceeds the reference value; and

a trouble point recovery unit which adds an another predetermined point value to each point values stored in said trouble point storage unit, when a predetermined time passes since the trouble point recovery unit added to the point value a last time.